



MIKE MCCUE MAKES TIME TO READ THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

FIND OUT WHY

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.  
Read ambitiously

# THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. To order presentation-ready copies for distribution to your colleagues, clients or customers visit <http://www.djreprints.com>.

<http://www.wsj.com/articles/SB10001424127887323446404579011083553854674>

 **ARTICLE FREE PASS**  
Enjoy your free sample of exclusive subscriber content. / **\$12 FOR 12 WEEKS** **SUBSCRIBE NOW**

TECHNOLOGY (/NEWS/TYPES/TECHNOLOGY)

## Elon Musk's Hyperloop Hits Wall of Skepticism

California Politicians Doubt Prospects of Transportation Concept

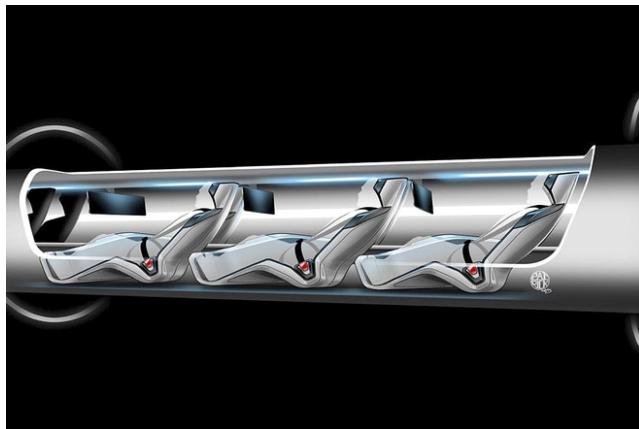
By ZUSHA ELINSON

Aug. 13, 2013 5:49 p.m. ET

Elon Musk's Hyperloop sped into a brick wall of

political reality Tuesday as California politicians said there was little chance the billionaire inventor's idea for a futuristic transport system would be built soon or on the public's dime.

Instead, lawmakers in Sacramento said they're planning to proceed at pace with plans for their own California high-speed rail that is scheduled to run from San Francisco to Los Angeles by 2029.



A sketch of the Hyperloop capsule with passengers onboard. *TESLA MOTORS/ASSOCIATED PRESS*

Mr. Musk announced the concept on Monday, putting a \$6 billion price tag on the transport system that would whisk passenger capsules at high speeds on a cushion of air inside a tube suspended above ground. He said it could transport passengers from San Francisco to Los Angeles in half an hour.

"I think it's a fascinating concept, but there's a long distance between imagination and implementation," said Bonnie Lowenthal, a Democrat who chairs the California State Assembly's Transportation Committee.

"Big infrastructure projects in California are very difficult," Ms. Lowenthal added. "We have very complicated funding, we have environmental protections, seismic faults and land acquisition—but that's just the shortlist."

Some critics of California's existing high-speed rail project, which has taken years to plan and will cost \$68 billion, welcomed Mr. Musk's announcement—especially if the project were to be privately funded.

"I think it's a great opportunity for looking at a private-sector solution for more efficient transportation," said Ted Gaines, the Republican vice chair of the state Senate Transportation committee. Mr. Gaines said that he would support the project, but doubted that Democrats would back an alternative to the current plans for high-speed rail.

Dan Richard, chairman of California's high-speed rail authority, suggested that there was more to building a transportation system than just the technology.

"If and when Mr. Musk pursues his Hyperloop technology, we'll be happy to share our experience about what it really takes to build a project in California, across seismic zones, minimizing impacts on farms, businesses and communities and protecting sensitive environmental areas and species," he said.

In a conference call Monday, Mr. Musk said the Hyperloop wouldn't require costly right-of-way acquisitions, a factor in the price of the current high-speed rail project.

The Tesla Motors Inc. founder said the system could be built in the median along Interstate 5 to cut down on property acquisition costs. Mr. Musk didn't address how the project would be funded.

In a blog post, Mr. Musk lamented, how could it be that the "home of Silicon Valley" would build "a bullet train that is both one of the most expensive per mile and one of the slowest in the world?"

A spokeswoman for Mr. Musk at Tesla said that "Elon's published document stands alone on this announcement. There is no one available to answer any follow-up questions."

—Evelyn M. Rusli contributed to this article.

**Write to Zusha Elinson at [zusha.elinson@wsj.com](mailto:zusha.elinson@wsj.com)**

Copyright 2014 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved

This copy is for your personal, non-commercial use only. Distribution and use of this material are governed by our Subscriber Agreement and by copyright law. For non-personal use or to order multiple copies, please contact Dow Jones Reprints at 1-800-843-0008 or visit [www.djreprints.com](http://www.djreprints.com).